



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Voyageurs National Park

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## Voyageurs National Park News Release

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For Immediate Release

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### VOYAGEURS NP SEEKS PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT ON PROPOSED BIKE TRAIL TO RAINY LAKE VISITOR CENTER

Voyageurs National Park is proposing to construct a bicycle trail that would connect the existing bike path on Highway 11 East with the Rainy Lake Visitor Center. The park is pursuing this project in partnership with Koochiching County through a grant under the 2006 Transportation bill sponsored by Congressman Oberstar. Although, this project is only partially funded, the partners want to complete all planning and compliance in advance. Once the project is fully funded, the park and county will coordinate and manage the trail's construction.

There is no bike lane along the current park road, and safety concerns exist for both bicyclists and motorists who are sharing this space.

Construction of a new bike path would involve modification of the surrounding landscape. This includes the removal of vegetation, blasting of bedrock outcrops, importation of fill materials, and modification of wetlands.

The park has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) document as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to evaluate the proposed action, to review alternatives and determine the potential environmental effects associated with trail construction. Three alternatives were assessed:

- 1) No Action: do not construct a bike trail or bike lanes.
- 2) Widen the existing road to provide space for bike lanes adjacent to the road.
- 3) Construct a separate paved bike path through the undeveloped land to the north of the existing road. This is the park's preferred alternative.


The Environmental Assessment provides a comparative analysis of the benefits and impacts of each of the alternate routes. The document is available for public review and comment from February 1, 2007 until March 2, 2007.

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The park has established a website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/voya> to allow anyone interested in park projects to view posted documents and provide comments to the park on the web, by contacting park staff by mail, e- mail or telephone.

A link to the Environmental Assessment is available on the park's main website at <http://www.nps.gov/voya/index.htm> .

Printed copies are located at the International Falls Public Library, the Rainy Lake Visitor Center and park headquarters.

You may request a copy of the Rainy Lake Visitor Center Bike Trail EA by calling the park at (218) 283- 9821. The document is 89 pages in length. Please specify whether you would prefer to receive a paper copy or a digital copy (available via email or on a CD).

For more information, please contact Chris Holbeck, the park's environmental planning coordinator at (218) 283- 9821.

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